SEAN PANIKKAR, Tenor

Sean Panikkar continues “to position himself as one of the stars of his generation… His voice is unassailable—firm, sturdy and clear, and he employs it with maximum dramatic versatility” [*Opera News*]. The American tenor of Sri Lankan heritage made his Metropolitan Opera debut under the baton of James Levine in *Manon Lescaut* (commercially available on DVD on EMI), and his European operatic debut in Mozart’s *Zaïde* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival in a production directed by Peter Sellars and conducted by Louis Langrée (commercially available on DVD on Opus Arte).

A highlight of the 2017-18 season is a Salzburg Festival debut as Dionysus in a new production of Henze’s *The Bassarids* directed by Krzysztof Warlikowski; the title also serves the tenor his Madrid debut in concert performances with the Spanish National Orchestra and Choir, both presentations under the baton of Kent Nagano. Sean Panikkar assays Don José in a production of *Carmen* with Madison Opera conducted by John DeMain and returns to the stage of Pittsburgh Opera for a role debut as Greenhorn in Jake Heggie’s *Moby Dick*. Additional appearances of the season include *JFK* with Opéra de Montréal, *The Summer King* at Michigan Opera Theatre, and Handel’s *Messiah* with the Ann Arbor Symphony under the auspices of University Musical Society.

Sean Panikkar returned last season to the Metropolitan Opera in productions of *Guillaume Tell*, *Jenůfa*, and *Roméo et Juliette* and, in a re-engagement with Pittsburgh Opera, he created the role of Wendell Smith in the world premiere of *The Summer King* by composer Daniel Sonenberg. The tenor made his Cincinnati Opera debut as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* in a production conducted by Louis Langrée and returned to the role of Alfredo in *La Traviata* for a debut at Opera Carolina.

Highly prized as an interpreter of contemporary music on leading international stages, Sean Panikkar created the roles of Adam in Giorgio Battistelli’s *CO2* for a debut at Teatro alla Scala in a world premiere conducted by Cornelius Meister and directed by Robert Carsen, Agent Henry Rathbone in David T. Little’s *JFK* at the Fort Worth Opera, and he garnered passionate acclaim in the title role of Jack Perla’s *Shalimar the Clown* for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Broadway World reported, “Sean Panikkar stands out above them all. This is truly *his* show… His pure, clear voice displays truly remarkable power. It shines like a beacon above the rest even when the entire cast are singing their hearts out. And his diction is superb. This is a longish opera and Shalimar is a tour de force role; Panikkar triumphs in it!”

Mr. Panikkar’s numerous engagements with the Metropolitan Opera feature the company premiere of *The Death of Klinghoffer* conducted by David Robertson in a powerful new production by director Tom Morris (*War Horse*), *Roméo et Juliette* under the baton of Plácido Domingo, *Lucia di Lammermoor* conducted by Marco Armiliato, and *Ariadne auf Naxos* led by Kirill Petrenko. Highlights of past seasons also include a new production of *Nabucco* at Washington National Opera, *La Bohème* staged by Francesca Zambello at the Royal Albert Hall in London and at Michigan Opera Theatre, *Béatrice et Bénèdict* with Opera Boston, *The Magic Flute* at Pittsburgh Opera and the Glimmerglass Festival, as well as what has come to be one of his signature parts, Nadir in *Les pêcheurs de perles,* for Fort Worth Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, and Opera Colorado. Additional operatic credits feature *Silent Night* at the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, *Salome* at Washington National Opera in the company’s new Francesca Zambello production and at the Saito Kinen Festival in performances conducted by Omer Meir Wellber, a debut at Santa Fe Opera in a new production of Menotti’s rarely produced *The Last Savage* directed by Ned Canty and conducted by George Manahan, a new production of *Otello* at The Dallas Opera, conducted by Graeme Jenkins and directed by Tim Albery, and Ricky Ian Gordon’s *The Grapes of Wrath* with the American Symphony Orchestra for the tenor’s Carnegie Hall debut.

Symphonic performances have featured Sean Panikkar with Leonard Slatkin and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra in Berlioz’s *Roméo et Juliette*, The Tristan Project with Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Mendelssohn’s *Elijah* with Michael Christie and the Phoenix Symphony, Händel’s *Messiah* with Ragnar Bohlin and the San Francisco Symphony, and Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony with Raymond Leppard and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra.

Sean Panikkar is a member of Forte, the operatic tenor group combining voices from different cultures into one incredible sound.  The trio was created and debuted for the first time ever on America’s Got Talent and had never met until only days before their first audition. During the summer 2013 broadcasts of America’s Got Talent, Forte was seen and heard by tens of millions of television viewers in national broadcasts on NBC.  Their self-titled debut recording on Columbia Records was released in November 2013 and a follow-up recording, The Future Classics, was released in 2015.

An alumnus of San Francisco Opera’s Adler Fellowship, Sean Panikkar holds Master’s and Bachelor degrees in Voice Performance from the University of Michigan.